

Garbage Gazette

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

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School Recycling Compliance Inspections Continue

In an effort to continue the school inspection program started last spring, 32 additional schools were visited during the last three months of '99. Schools with large student populations west of Hartford were the main focus of the fall inspection program. However, schools in other parts of the state were also visited based on complaints and/or requests from school administrators.

Inspections continue to reveal that most schools have a recycling infrastructure in place. The common problem throughout the schools is a lack of awareness of state recycling requirements. Many students, teachers and administrators fail to recognize that recycling must take place at school as it does at home. Some think it is only voluntary or a nice environmental project. While we applaud schools who have teachers and students who get involved in recycling at their school, programs should not lapse because a committed teacher leaves. It is the responsibility of each school administration to have a recycling program in place in accordance with state law.

Another common deficiency is the lack of program visibility. For instance, recycling containers are labeled in a subdued fashion or not labeled at all. Some schools send mixed messages by having recycling bins in only some of the classrooms and not in administrative offices. A common complaint is that some teachers undermine the program by using recycling bins as file storage containers or totes for gym equipment, etc. When students carry beverages into the classroom soda cans and water bottles are often left in trash barrels or wherever a flat surface exists. As in previous inspections, most kitchens are doing a good job of recycling old corrugated cardboard and metal cans.



Once a school is inspected, a follow-up letter is sent to school officials offering guidance on how to improve upon their recycling programs. Several recommendations that have proven to be successful include: (1) forming a district-wide recycling committee which could advise all the schools in the district; (2) improving upon the graphic visibility of recycling programs by using colorful posters and signage; and (3) using newsletters and morning announcements to regularly remind staff and students to recycle.



We would like to congratulate several schools that are doing a great job of recycling including the entire Torrington School District, Shelton High School, the Stonington School District, and New Britain High School. We encourage schools that are having difficulty to contact their colleagues at these schools to learn about successful programs. Schools are also encouraged to contact winners of the Connecticut Recyclers Coalition Green School Contest (see Dec. Gazette). Schools cannot effectively teach young people about environmental responsibility if they are not practicing the most basic form of environmental protection - recycling.

The Department of Environmental Protection is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, providing programs and services in a fair and impartial manner. In conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, DEP makes every effort to provide equally effective services for persons with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities needing auxiliary aids and services, or for more information by voice or TTY/TDD call (860) 424-3000.

Connecticut Recycles Day Prize Winners

Winners in the Connecticut Recycles Day Prize drawing are listed below. Our sincere thanks to those generous companies that have provided us with prizes, many for three years in a row.

Adult Prizes

\$500 Grocery Store Gift Certificate
Donated by the CT Soft Drink Assoc.
Winner, Emily Ricketts, Bozrah

\$500 Gift Certificate for Energy Conservation products from the “Smart Living” Catalog
Donated by Tetra Pak
Winner, Karen Carrier, Wethersfield

Travel Package-leather-trimmed garment bag, briefcase, and duffel bag made from recycled soda bottles
Donated by the American Plastics Council
Winner, George Pashos, Windsor Locks

Compost Bin & Rain Saver Made from recycled plastic
Donated by Signature Marketing
Winner, Mrs. Donald Murray, Pawcatuk

Year’s Supply of Ice Cream
Donated by HP HOOD, Inc.
Winner, Cara Soboslai, Wallingford

\$100 Gift Certificate
Donated by Delicate Balance
Winner, Delbert Moore, Jewett City

Recycled Tote, T-shirt & Other Promotional Products
Donated by the CT Recycles Day Steering Committee
Winner, Teresa B. Driver, Naugatuck

Youth Prizes

Computer and Monitor
Donated by the Manchester J.C. Penney Catalog Fullfillment Center
Winner, Jim Foran, East Hartford Middle School

\$2,000 in Fluorescent Bulb Recycling Services
Donated by Northeast Lamp Recycling
Winner, Denise Ortiz, Farm Hill School, Middletown

\$500 in Teacher Scholarships to CT DEP training programs
Donated by Northeast Utilities
Winner, Andre Haley, John F. Kennedy Elementary School, Windsor

\$500 Gift Certificate to Purchase Recycled Benches
Donated by Tetra Pak
Winner, Chelsea Mitchell, Wells Rd. School, Granby

6 Foot Recycled Plastic Bench
Donated by M.E. O’Brien & Sons
Winner, Ann Aindon, Southeast School Mansfield

A Week at Boy Scout Camp
Donated by the CT Rivers Council
Winner, James Osso, Shelton

EPA Funds Green Purchasing Guide

Under a grant from EPA, the National Association of Counties (NACo’s) has developed the “Environmental Purchasing Starter Kit” to help local governments set up a cost-effective environmental purchasing program. The kit is designed for purchasing agents, county and city managers, recycling coordinators, local elected officials, product users and vendors. The kit includes the following components: case studies on energy efficiency and pest control, a sample purchasing resolution, a glossary of environmental purchasing terms, and a baseline survey for internal local government use. Later this year, EPA will be releasing several Internet access tools to accommodate users with all levels of environmental purchasing experience. The starter kit is available at NACo’s website at:www.naco.org/programs/environ/purchase.cfm. When the EPA tools are released , they will be available at: www.epa.gov/opptintr/epp.

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